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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, June 5, 2006

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**GOVERNOR NAPOLITANO TO VISIT AJO FOR CURLEY SCHOOL  
CONSTRUCTION CELEBRATION**

*Tucson, AZ* -- Pima County, the State of Arizona, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are working with the Ajo community to promote a unique housing and economic development project in rural Arizona. This project involves the adaptive re-use of the historic Curley School into 30 affordable live/work rental units for artists, artisans, and individuals with creative home businesses. Sponsoring and driving the project is the tri-cultural and nonprofit organization, the International Sonoran Desert Alliance, (ISDA).

Pima County District 3 Supervisor Sharon Bronson, ISDA President Joe Joaquin, Tohono O'odham Chairwoman Vivian Juan-Saunders and Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano will celebrate the first phase of the renovation of this site on Thursday, June 22, 2006 from 9:00 A.M. to 10:00 AM. at the Curley School. The school is located at the intersection of Esperanza Avenue and West Vananda Avenue. Guided tours of the school grounds will be provided immediately following a brief presentation. Traffic on the southwest corner of the five-legged intersection of Malacata Street, Lomita Avenue, Fundicion Street, Esperanza Avenue and Vananda Avenue will be closed off and detoured so that the general public may assemble at this location.

The Curley School, located in the Ajo Townsite, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a rare example of a model company town, built during the City Beautiful movement of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Built in 1919, the Curley School is an architectural masterpiece of Spanish Colonial Revival style and anchors the western axis of the town's center and historic district. When all phases are complete, the Curley School's eight historic buildings, spread out over a seven-acre campus, will not only be a local treasure, but also a magnet for cultural tourism in the region.

Tracy Taft, Executive Director of the International Sonoran Desert Alliance asks "Are you interested in creativity? If so, you must come see the Curley School Project and how we are combining historic preservation and affordable housing with arts-based economic development and broad-based community participation here in Ajo, the heart of the Sonoran Desert."

For more information about this event contact the International Sonoran Desert Alliance at (520) 387-6823 or Pima County Board of Supervisor Sharon Bronson's District 3 office at (520) 740-8051.

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